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# How ESOL Teachers Become Aware of Communicative Peace

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts  
in Teaching degree at the SIT Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont.

August 1, 2010

IPP Advisor: Radmila Popovic

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## Abstract

This paper examines the implications that the relationship between teacher language awareness and communicative peace may have on educational programs for teachers of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). The evaluation begins by analyzing proposals set out by the applied peace linguist Francisco Gomes de Matos, who suggests that ESOL teachers should teach communicative peace as an element of communicative competence, and also that education programs should provide training to support this approach. By juxtaposing current literature on structural and linguistic violence with Gomes de Matos' classroom techniques, the hypothesis is made that teachers who would teach communicative peace need a certain level of awareness of sociolinguistic and strategic competence. This discovery is then compared with Stephen Andrews' research on teacher language awareness, which explains that teachers need a degree of language awareness in order to effectively teach grammar. Replacing the term 'grammar' with the concept of 'pragmatic competence' confirms the paper's hypothesis. It is suggested that teacher-training programs need to include to their curricula, courses that aim to increase awareness to how language can be peaceful and violent. The paper finally proposes a method for raising such awareness.

## Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Descriptors

Applied Linguistics

Communicative Competence

Conflict Resolution

English Teacher Education

English (Second Language)

Language Awareness

Peace

Sociolinguistics

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

People learn second or foreign languages because of their need or desire to communicate. Not knowing this new language may be the only obstacle standing in the way of acquiring certain information, or of building interpersonal connections. Information may be discovered through books or teachers; connections may be built between people of different cultures. What if the language could be learned while at the same time fulfilling another purpose? What if by learning a language, learners were not only able to communicate with someone from another culture, but they were also able to communicate with them peacefully? Being able to do this could create a space of acceptance and understanding between the interacting parties. And if the language being learned had a strong global presence, then it may also be possible that this peaceful space could be built between nations. If people had the opportunity to achieve such a state through language, then wouldn't this hypothesis be worth exploring?

Applied peace linguist Francisco Gomes de Matos believes it is possible to achieve this end. He advocates for teachers of English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) to teach using the peace linguistic approach, which focuses on how language can be utilized in order to promote peaceful communication. In an issue of the World Federation of Modern Language Associations' bi-annual World News publication, Gomes de Matos (2002) recommends a set of principles as a way to



encourage common teaching practices in ESOL contexts worldwide. One of these principles suggests that, “teachers of English to speakers of other languages should be educated not only to be able to communicate about peace but to know how to communicate in peaceful ways, with a focus on communicative peace, as a deeper dimension of communicative competence” (Gomes de Matos 2002). He follows this principle by proposing, “TESOL Education Programs should include a methodological component centered on how to prepare teachers to teach English for communicative peace” (Gomes de Matos 2002). Although both these proposals may have merit, they also leave one wondering how such ends could be accomplished. Gomes de Matos (2002) provides suggestions for classroom techniques, yet these alone may not be sufficient in order to achieve the intended goal if teacher language awareness is not taken into account. Without language awareness, teachers may not be prepared to address communicative competence; as a result, possibly rendering Gomes de Matos’ classroom techniques ineffective.

A need to address language awareness in teacher education programs has also been recognized by Professor Stephen Andrews. In his work on teacher language awareness (TLA), Andrews (2007, ix) contends that ESOL teachers require a reasonable degree of TLA in order to perform competently in the classroom. Although he focuses on TLA as it relates to grammar, he acknowledges that TLA also relates to other aspects of ESOL instruction (Andrews 2007, ix). Notwithstanding this acknowledgement, Andrews does not mention the concepts of sociolinguistic or strategic competence as they relate to TLA. Both these domains may have a direct link to communicative peace, and consequently, should be explored.

Andrews' research on awareness provides a doorway to the importance of TLA, yet it falls short of explaining how TLA effects competences connected to communicative peace. While Gomes de Matos offers suggestions for applying communicative peace in the ESOL classroom, his propositions are restricted by the fact that he does not consider language awareness. As a result of the limitations of their studies, three questions arise: What kind of language awareness do teachers need to possess in order to communicate from this perspective? How do teachers acquire this awareness? What must be added to TESOL education programs in order to train teachers towards this awareness? In this paper, I propose the idea that if teacher education programs were aimed at raising TLA as it is associated to sociolinguistic and strategic competence, specifically in terms of how language can be peaceful and violent, then ESOL teachers could be better prepared to teach towards communicative peace competence.

In an attempt to explain why English is targeted as a tool for peace promotion, Chapter 2 will focus on the research of World Englishes and English as global language as described by sociolinguist Patricia Friedrich. As another strong proponent of peace linguistics who advocates peaceful social change through English, Friedrich's work will be a strong point of reference in various sections of this paper. As previously mentioned, Chapter 3 will define peace linguistics. This concept can be divided into two categories (linguistic diversity and sustainability, and communicative peace), yet only the category comprising Gomes de Matos' concept of communicative peace will be considered throughout this paper. In Chapter 4, theories of structural and linguistic violence will be examined in order to

better understand the possible sociolinguistic awareness teachers may need in order to consider the value of communicative peace. Chapter 5 will explain how communicative peace may find its position in models for communicative competence. This chapter will also define the concept of applied peace linguistics, while bringing to light the shortcomings of the classroom applications Gomes de Matos provides, as they relate to communicative competence. It will also explore the limitations of Friedrich's recommendations for ESOL teacher education programs, despite her intention of wanting to raise teacher awareness to sociolinguistic and strategic competence as associated to peace linguistics. These limitations will be addressed by showing how current research on teacher language awareness, as it concerns itself with the teacher's personal experience, pertains to teaching communicative peace. A teacher's awareness of how language is peaceful and violent may determine how effective he or she is at teaching communicative peace as an element of communicative competence. The conclusion will recommend practices for raising teacher language awareness as it relates to the concept of communicative peace that could be useful for ESOL teacher education programs.

## Chapter 2

### Why English for Peace?

This chapter will explore how the research of sociolinguist Patricia Friedrich supports Gomes de Matos' advocacy of teaching peace via ESOL. In her book *Language, Negotiation and Peace: The Use of English in Conflict Resolution*, Patricia Friedrich makes a strong case for the role of world Englishes, and English as a global language, as tools for instilling and restoring peace between language communities. Friedrich's research is a comprehensive examination of the positive connection between English and peace, and her analysis of where English currently stands internationally provides her with the leverage needed to make this point. This chapter hopes to provide a clearer picture of why English is the target language for linguistic peace promotion.

Throughout her book, Friedrich uses the term *world Englishes* in order to describe the current state of the English language. This term is mostly associated with the leading scholar on this subject, Professor Braj Kachru. Kachru is commonly cited for his work on the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles of English, which examines the breadth of English use and users worldwide (Kachru and Nelson 1996, 77). In the Inner Circle, countries (e.g. Canada and Australia) that use English as their dominant language are found. The Outer Circle is comprised of countries, such as India and the Philippines, where English merged with the native language and culture after British and American colonial actions. In these countries, English has a

strong position within their institutions and plays a large role in the lives of citizens. The Expanding Circle includes countries (e.g. Korea and Mexico) that recognize English for its international use and therefore learn English for its use in specific situations (e.g. business and travel). Comparing the three circles, the Expanding Circle is comprised of the greatest number of English users, approximately 759 million, and displays the extent to which English has become a global language (Friedrich 2007, 19). People are learning English for a variety of reasons, but the common thread between these diverse perspectives is cross-cultural communication. Whether for communication between cultures as with EFL (English as a foreign language), or for communication within a nation as with ESL (English as a second language), what is revealed from these concentric circles is the wide spectrum of communities that are using English.

Friedrich also describes another perspective that has emerged in relation to English, which is David Crystal's account of English as a global language. In his book *English as a Global Language*, Crystal examines how the globalization of English historically rooted itself in international politics and is now establishing itself as the language used for international communication. These are reasons why English is now the language adopted as the common language, or the lingua franca, between parties who speak different languages. It is used as the official language for groups ranging from political organizations such as the European Union to athletic associations like the African Hockey Federation (Crystal 2003, 87 – 88). A trip to a popular tourist destination quickly reveals the fact that English is the most common language used between foreign vacationers, and used by the tourist industry in that

area. Whether for leisure or economic reasons, it is obvious that English has a strong international impact.

Through the study of Kachru's circles paradigm, and the examination of English as a global language, we learn that English exists in more forms than the often-assumed singular realm of Standard English. Because of the varied cultural and linguistic circles in which it exists, English has morphed into a variety of distinct forms. Examples range from Southern American English to Indian English (Kachru and Nelson 1996, 86). English speakers worldwide have made English their own, allowing the term *world Englishes* to exist. Although other languages have gone through similar transformations (e.g. French or Hindi), no other language in history has ever been in greater use on an international scale (Kachru and Nelson 1996, 71).

Having witnessed such transformations and adaptations, some people might feel concerned and protective of their language, and may want to defend themselves against the current lingua franca. Friedrich (2007, 31) also acknowledges the apprehension that exists in placing such significance on a language that is connected to hostile historical events. The applied linguist A. Suresh Canagarajah (1999, 57) has examined this idea:

The English language has had a history of imposition for political and material reasons in most periphery communities (the outer and expanding circles), often in competition with native languages. It is still deeply implicated in struggles for dominance against other languages, with conflicting implications for the construction of identity, community, and culture of the local people. In opting to learn and use English, therefore, students are making complex ideological and social choices. For users of English in these communities, the language embodies its controversial history since colonial times.

While recognizing these contemptible acts in his book *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*, Canagarajah also examines how English can be taught and learned while respecting local languages and cultures. He believes that teachers should educate learners to maintain a balance between English and their native tongue (Canagarajah 1999, 197). Friedrich (2007, 31-32) echoes his suggestions. According to her, maintaining a balance between learners' native languages and English works to promote peace instead of conflict (Friedrich 2007, 31-33). It is not enough to learn how to communicate peacefully through a new language, it is also important to be at peace with your own language. Both these linguists see English as a potential tool or resource for maintaining peace and balance.

Friedrich points to world Englishes, and English as a global language, in order to show how these languages have the potential to create a foundation for international linguistic peace. Throughout her research she maintains that the impetus for peaceful social change that English has as the current lingua franca cannot be ignored. English is a language that is far reaching, and it is for this reason that it is believed to have the potential to build and maintain bridges between language communities. Canagarajah agrees with Friedrich in relation to this potential. Yet despite these positions, neither linguist addresses why violence may exist in languages, which may be their reason for encouraging ESOL teachers to teach peace linguistics. However, in order to shed light on this assumption, peace linguistics will be defined in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Peace Linguistics**

This chapter will define peace linguistics, and the two different approaches being taken towards encouraging its promotion. The first viewpoint relates to linguistic diversity and sustainability, while the second position is concerned with Gomes de Matos' concept of communicative peace, which is the theory in question. By examining his definitions of communication, peace, violence and conflict, one will have a better understanding of communicative peace and how it may translate into the ESOL classroom.

The emergence of the peace linguistic approach – approach here defined as a theory of language and language learning (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 20) – comes in response to the needs some linguists and language teachers have for addressing the conflict and violence they witness within, and between various language communities. The conflict they observe includes the extinction of language in various cultures, and also consists of linguistic violence, which some linguists and academics conclude may exist on a general scale in cultures worldwide. Rooted in linguistics, in that it explores language and communication, the peace linguistic approach aligns itself with sociolinguistic theory as it considers how language relates to culture and society (Friedrich 2007, 12). This approach is also founded in peace studies, a field that surfaced parallel to the inception of the United Nations as a response to the pressing need for peace restoration after World War II (Friedrich



2007, 12). Peace studies, and its counterpart peace education, focuses on how conflicts can be resolved, how peace can be regained, as well as how it can be cultivated (Salomon 2002, 4). In his book *The Dictionary of Language*, renowned linguist, David Crystal (2001, 254), defines peace linguistics as “a climate of opinion which emerged during the 1990’s among many linguists and language teachers, in which linguistic principles, methods, findings, and applications were seen as a means of promoting peace and human rights at a global level. The approach emphasizes the value of linguistic diversity and multilingualism, both internationally and intranationally, and asserts the need to foster language attitudes which respect the dignity of individual speakers and speech communities”. As is seen from this definition, the peace linguistic approach can be interpreted in many ways.

In 1996, UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1996) adopted a Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, which outlines the many facets of linguistic human rights and peace. Non-governmental organizations such as Linguapax, and Terralingua, work to advance these rights on an international scale. The list of activities, found on their website, in which Linguapax is involved includes, “consultations to state and substate language policy makers, collaboration in language revitalization and standardization projects on behalf of minority language communities, and elaboration of teaching materials advocating the values of linguistic and cultural diversity.” These activities enforce their agenda, which “is to rally linguistic communities worldwide around the belief that languages, as essential vehicles of identity and cultural expression are

inseparable from the goals of peace and intercultural understanding.” As indicated on their website, Terralingua follows a similar agenda in that one of its purposes, “is to foster the perpetuation of the world’s linguistic diversity in all its forms, regardless of political, demographic, or linguistic status, and to promote respect for linguistic human rights.” These organizations exemplify the importance of linguistic diversity and sustainability as means to achieve and maintain linguistic peace. Crystal (2004) also advocates for adding this dimension to educational programs as a way to promote understanding, and therefore peaceful preservation of language communities. This facet of peace linguistics deserves to be noted in order to better understand where peace linguistics stands. However, the following dimension will be the focus of this paper.

The following perspective on peace linguistics differs from linguistic diversity and sustainability since its core principle is placed on teaching others how to communicate peacefully. This second interpretation is what Gomes de Matos has coined *communicative peace*. This term encompasses his belief that language should be used “to promote peace and the incorporation of values of human rights, justice and peace into one’s set of core values” (Friedrich 2007, 52), and that “human beings’ right to a peaceful and just life should be matched by a corresponding human responsibility to communicate peacefully” (Gomes de Matos 2000, 341). According to him, the correlation between communicative peace and human rights could contribute to the strengthening of humanity’s moral code. In order to get a clearer understanding of communicative peace, Gomes de Matos’ definitions of

*communication* and *language* as they relate to *peace*, *violence*, and *conflict* will be examined.

Since the act of communication is a multifarious transaction, giving it a definition can be a complex task. We communicate with each other through sound, movement, visual symbols, silence, and through the lens of our cultures. According to the Merriam-Webster Online dictionary, communication is defined as “an act of transmitting”, or “a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs or behavior.” This common system of communication builds itself into language via our cultural values (e.g. individualism vs. collectivism), worldview (e.g. view of life and death), and social organizations (e.g. family) (Samovar and Porter 2000, 10-11). In this sense, language exists in accordance to its social reality. From a social semiotic perspective – semiotics being the study of signs, and social semiotics being the study of how signs are formed according to the social context, as cited by Hodge in Semiotics Encyclopedia Online – language is a “holistic network of various signs in the environment, including gestures, silences, body postures, graphic and other visual and acoustic symbols which shape a context of meaning and invite us to respond to it” (Kramsch 2002). How does the context of meaning manifest in relation to conflict, violence, and peace, and how does Gomes de Matos suggest we respond to it?

For Gomes de Matos (2001), communication is an act of sharing, and he notes how this act can bring about harmony or disharmony. In order to illustrate this, he gives the examples of communicating responsibly and irresponsibly. In relation to

communicating responsibly (an act that creates harmony), he provides the suggestion of communicating in a friendly manner thereby showing respect to others (Gomes de Matos 2001). He also recommends monitoring sentences or expressions that may create defensive responses, and then refrain from using them (Gomes de Matos 2001). Regarding the irresponsible tone that communication can take, which brings disharmony, Gomes de Matos (2001) considers aggressive, offensive, and insensitive language to be part of this category. By avoiding this kind of language there may be less likelihood that conflict, or violence will occur.

While Gomes de Matos does not clearly define conflict, from his perspective of what constitutes disharmonious communication I assume that he believes conflict exists when language creates distance and defensiveness. By looking at a list of verbs he created, which he explains “violent communicative acts” (Gomes de Matos 2006, 160), a similar conclusion can be drawn for his definition of violence. Some of the verbs on this list include: abuse, humiliate, oppress, disrespect, bully, or stigmatize. These verbs show how language can create a state of violence between the speaker and the receiver in that they create hurt and harm. The concept of linguistic violence, as well as the idea of how hurt and harm may exist in language, will be explored in Chapter 4.

Although Gomes de Matos promotes the avoidance of conflict, he realizes that conflict will occur. His following description of language clarifies how he makes sense of the relationship between peace and conflict within communication; “Language is a mental marvel for peaceful meaning making and problem solving”

(2006, 159). This description captures the peace potential that he believes language carries by addressing the fact that part of this potential lies in the human ability to resolve conflicts via language. He expands this point in his article “Language, Peace and Conflict Resolution” where he explores the peace linguistic relevance of three established methods of conflict resolution: Nonviolent Communication, Appreciative Inquiry, and Powerful Non-defensive Communication (Gomes de Matos 2006, 162-167). An examination of this article shows that communication involves sharing an experience via language where peace has the possibility of becoming the end result even when conflicts arise.

If Gomes de Matos believes language has the capacity for peaceful meaning making, then how does he define peace? Reflecting on his definition of communicative peace, the importance he places on promoting values of human rights, justice, and peace via language resurfaces. He believes that communicating peacefully is an essential human right. Contributing to these values and rights himself, Gomes de Matos has created various checklists, examined in more detail in Chapter 5, that suggest different ways to stimulate communicative peace. The terminology he uses can shed some light on his view of peaceful language. For example, he encourages the use of “humanizing” language: language that is humane rather than dehumanizing (Gomes de Matos 2006). Humanizing language includes language that is friendly, responsible, sensitive and compassionate (Gomes de Matos 2001 & 2002). Although Gomes de Matos does not explicitly define the concept of peace, it is possible to infer from the content of his educational checklists that for him peace is defined by the cooperation and consideration that exists between two

parties who are in contact via language. Peace is witnessed when a language exchange comes from a place of valuing the other as a legitimate human being with feelings and needs.

Having dissected two different approaches to peace linguistics, a better conclusion of this field can be drawn. Although Linguapax, Terralingua and David Crystal are concerned with linguistic diversity and sustainability, while Gomes de Matos focuses on how language can be used to communicate peacefully, they all share the same vision of positive social change via language. Gomes de Matos' explanation of communicative peace aims to clarify why teachers should teach communicative peace, yet it does not mention the awareness needed to teach from this perspective. Peace linguists may have an essential understanding of how violence influences language, and that certain types of language may encourage violence. It may be this awareness that drives them to promote peace linguistics. However, without this awareness ESOL teachers may fail to see the relevance in promoting communicative peace. Without this understanding, why would a teacher concern himself or herself with teaching this type of communication? If teachers already consider their language as being peaceful, they may have no need to promote peace via language. The difference between teachers who teach communicative peace and teachers who do not may have to do with the level of awareness they have of how violence relates to language. I will examine current theories on structural and linguistic violence in order to understand the potential awareness needed by ESOL teachers who aim to promote communicative peace.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Violence in Language**

This chapter reviews the sociological perspective of structural violence as theorized by the sociologist and founder of peace studies Johan Galtung, and will correlate his theories with professor of philosophy William C. Gay's hypothesis of linguistic violence. By investigating Galtung's research, informed conclusions can be made to explain why violence may exist and perpetuate within cultures. Once one is able to understand Galtung's hypothesis, they may have a better comprehension of Gay's explanation of linguistic violence. Gomes de Matos does not thoroughly explain his understanding of linguistic violence, yet it is this understanding that an ESOL teacher may need in order to teach communicative peace. Both Galtung's and Gay's research provide insight into the possible assumptions behind Gomes de Matos' promotion of communicative peace. The correlation between these two academics will have two purposes: to emphasize why communicative peace may exist, and to exemplify the kind of language awareness that might be needed in order to successfully teach communicative peace.

In his advocacy of teaching communicative peace via the teaching of ESOL, Gomes de Matos never specifies the identity of the teachers to, and for whom, he advocates. Due to this lack of specificity I surmise that he refers to all teachers of ESOL. This includes ESOL teachers for whom English is their second language, as much as it accounts for teachers who consider English their dominant language.

Since he urges them to teach communicative peace, it is safe to assume he believes that regardless of their backgrounds, the societies from which these teachers come have similar issues surrounding violence and language. From this standpoint, Gomes de Matos likely believes violence prevails in their language systems. From where would such a belief originate? This answer may be found by examining existing theories of how violence manifests itself in languages in general. The following reviews popular sociolinguistic and sociological positions in order to meet this end.

### ***Structural Violence***

It can be difficult to discern whether language affects society, or society affects language, because of the many sociolinguistic stances on the relationship between language and society, it can be difficult. Some sociolinguists view language as the determinant or influent of social structures within societies, while others take the view “that social structure may either influence or determine linguistic structure and/or behavior” (Wardhaugh 2006, 10). Some believe that language and society rely on each other, and as a result, are in constant flux: one affecting the other’s structure. Taking the latter sociolinguistic position, Gomes de Matos’ conclusions regarding communicative peace become clearer. He may believe that the social structure influences language structures, yet he may also see the potential language has for changing the social structure, hence his reason for promoting communicative peace.



In *The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology*, Johnson (2000, 295) explains that a social structure is defined by the quality of relationships and distributions found within and between its compositional parts. A social structure is comprised of various social systems. A social system is defined as an “interdependent set of cultural and structural elements that can be thought of as a unit” (2000, 295). In terms of relationships, Johnson explains that each part within a social system is interconnected with other parts, as well as with the social system at large. If society is taken as a social system, then one of its parts could be an individual’s social status and another could be a social organization. The influential relationships between these parts create the social system, which in turn impacts the social structure (Johnson 2000, 295). The second property of social structures includes distributions between the different parts of the social system (Johnson 2000, 295). Using society again as an example, power may be one kind of distribution that is observed. In a democracy power is supposed to be distributed equally, while in a dictatorship power rises to the top leaving many at the bottom powerless. It is this concept of unequal power distributions that provides the basis for theories of structural and linguistic violence.

Galtung (1999, 42) observes the emergence of violence in the social structure and connects it to unequal power distributions. Galtung believes imbalances of power exist in most social structures, and describes this in his typology of violence (see Table 1 below). Here he relates his concept of structural violence to the needs he considers essential for humans to sustain in order for peace to exist (e.g. survival, well-being, identity and freedom needs). In association to these needs, Galtung

(1999, 40) here outlines the types of structural violence he believes resides within most societies. Only his perspective on identity and freedom needs will be explored here. In relation to these two needs, he uses four terms – penetration, segmentation, marginalization, and fragmentation – to explain how a social structure may become violent, and as a result, how violence may leave its imprint on the human psyche. He considers these terms as being exploitative methods people in power use to hold control over others, and as result causes structural violence (Galtung 1999, 42).

Table 1. Galtung's typology of structural violence

	Identity Needs	Freedom Needs
Structural Violence	Penetration, Segmentation	Marginalization, Fragmentation

*Source:* Data adapted from Galtung 1999, 40.

Galtung examines the structural terms of penetration and segmentation and how they violate the human need for identity (1999, 42). Penetration occurs when the few people in power are able to instill their ideology into the belief structure of the majority of people within a society. Segmentation takes place when this majority's involvement in the ideology is regulated; they are left in the dark with regard to what the people in power are strategizing. An example of this could be a government's military. Instilling the belief that war is inevitable and sometimes necessary, the few in power are able to control the majority, and at the same time provide a sense of stability within the society at large. In this example, the majority believes war is possible, yet they are not aware of the reasons why war may take place. Galtung sees the next two forms of structural violence, marginalization and fragmentation, as violations of the human need for freedom (1999, 42). With

marginalization the idea is to keep the majority separate from the few in power, and through fragmentation keep the majority disconnected from each other. This keeps the majority from raising consciousness and from forming a unified offensive against the few in power. Examples of this could be the divisions of social and economic classes. By controlling human needs of freedom and identity, we observe how exploitation plays a part in creating structural violence.

Although the trajectory is not necessarily linear, Galtung explains that structural violence can also lead to cultural violence. When the exploitative methods mentioned above are considered to be the norm, we see an example of cultural violence. Once this is the case, direct violence, such as killing or malnutrition, becomes acceptable. As Galtung (1999, 39) puts it, "Cultural violence makes direct and structural violence look, even feel right – or at least not wrong." When violence is accepted and legitimized by a culture, when it becomes part of a social structure, it also finds its way into the language.

### ***Linguistic Violence***

While Galtung focuses on how violence relates to social structures, William C. Gay (1998) focuses on how elements within social structures create linguistic violence. His perspective is based on the studies he has done in relation to language and society. Aligning himself with linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, Gay (1998) considers language to be a social institution since he believes it to be a habit integrated by the conformity of its speakers; much the same as the institution of marriage. According to Johnson (2000, 157) and Dictionary.com, an institution is

defined as a persisting set of norms, customs, laws, or practices that are established as the foundational elements of a society. As a part of the social structure, an institution is affected by relationships and distributions, which in turn impacts the social system, in this case, society. In regard to relationships, language as an institution might be affected, and possibly manipulated, by the status of individuals and the organizations with which they associate. In terms of distribution, language could be influenced by the distributions of power, wealth, prestige, or lack thereof. This last point is similar to Galtung's concept of structural violence, and this is where Gay explains how covert linguistic violence occurs. For Gay (1998), "language, as an institution can do violence that is psychological rather than physical." He explains that, "linguistic violence occurs when we are hurt psychologically by words and when we are harmed socially by words."

In his article "Exposing and Overcoming Linguistic Alienation and Linguistic Violence" (1998) Gay examines how language and communication relate to the unequal distributions of power within societies, and that through this imbalance, linguistic violence arises. He makes the distinction that this kind of violence creates psychological harm instead of hurt. Gay (1999) contends that hurt is caused by violence that is detectable while harm is undetectable violence. Hurtful language, such as a racist comment, can be seen as a conscious form of linguistic violence since it can be used in order to hurt the listener. Because these comments are made consciously, they are considered to be psychological, offensive, and overt forms of violence. Harmful language, on the other hand, is seen as oppressive rather than offensive and is considered to be a social, oppressive, and covert form of violence.

This can be compared to Galtung's concept of exploitation as structural violence. By creating a separation between members of a society, harmful language inhibits the possibility of these members rising against the people in power; therefore, maintaining the imbalance of power. Oppressive language serves as a device to marginalize and fragment.

Language that is considered to be sexist can serve as an example of this kind of oppressive language. For example, the use of the affix "man" in words such as mankind, chairman, postman, and freshman, seems to ignore the part women also play in the roles these words convey. Another example would be when the pronoun "he" to make reference to men and women instead of gender inclusive pronouns "he or she". Such expressions may have emerged from the covert institutional agreement that within this social structure women are considered inferior to men. People who use this kind of language may not realize that it exists as a result of the distribution of power dominated by male values. The crucial point that Gay (1998) makes is that some people who use, or hear, sexist, racist, or heterosexist language, may be unconscious of its oppressive nature and they may not even consider it to be offensive. This is what Gay describes as being a subtle form of linguistic violence. These subtle forms of structural and linguistic violence, believed to be embedded within the social structure, may have influenced Gomes de Matos' impetus for wanting to add communicative peace to communicative competence models.

Examining the assessment on structural and linguistic violence, it is possible to conclude that Gomes de Matos believes that linguistic violence exists because the

social structure maintains this convention. This belief, however, is not held without hope. Both Gay (1999) and Galtung (2007) believe that peaceful ways of existing and communicating can push social structures away from violent actions and words. Gomes de Matos (2000, 340), also fervent in this regard, voices his position, "...it is incumbent on us to exercise our professional communicative responsibility so as to contribute to universalizing communicative peace, not only as an analytical concept but as a pervasive process characterizing micro and macro social structures". Once again, this brings forward the sociolinguistic perspective that language may have a direct impact on a social structure's constitution. Gomes de Matos connects part of this impact to teachers of ESOL adopting the concept of communicative peace. The argument here, however, is that if teachers held such an awareness of linguistic violence, they may be compelled to teach communicative peace. Nevertheless, a question remains unanswered regarding this assessment and recommendation: if violence is so deeply fixed in the social structure, and as Galtung and Gay explain, is in many cases imperceptible, what has to happen during the training of ESOL teachers which will help them become aware that linguistic violence may be an issue? I further discuss this question in the subsequent chapter.

## **Chapter 5**

### **From Communicative Competence to Language Awareness**

This chapter looks at how communicative peace, as defined by Gomes de Matos, may fit into a communicative competence framework. However, it I also hope to show that Gomes de Matos's current suggestions for applying communicative peace in the ESOL classroom may not provide enough support for teachers to make the connection between communicative peace and communicative competence. As stated in the introduction, Gomes de Matos suggests that ESOL teachers should be taught how to communicate peacefully while understanding that communicative peace is a deeply rooted feature of communicative competence. He believes that one way to help prepare peaceful language users is to add communicative peace to current models of communicative competence (2000, 340). For Gomes de Matos (2000, 340), creating this tie is paramount to the realization of global human rights and peace. As a way of addressing this tie, he has devoted much of his work to the field of applied peace linguistics. Within this field, Gomes de Matos, supported by Friedrich, has provided various practical techniques for implementing communicative peace in the ESOL classroom. However, if these techniques are to effectively teach language learners how to be peaceful language users, the teacher's language awareness must first be raised.

As Friedrich suggests, raising awareness of sociolinguistic and strategic competence should begin in TESOL education programs (Friedrich 2007, 57). With such awareness, teachers may be prepared, or at least have the choice, to teach

communicative peace as a “deeper dimension of communicative competence” (Gomes de Matos 2002). In order to address the shortcomings of Friedrich’s suggestions, current research on teacher language awareness (TLA) (Andrews 2001 & 2007) will be combined and compared to Gomes de Matos’s communicative peace. I hope to demonstrate that if teachers are to teach towards this competence, they first need to become aware of how this competence relates to their own language use and knowledge.

### ***Communicative Competence and Communicative Peace***

In his examination of communicative competence and communicative peace, Gomes de Matos specifically looks to the work of sociolinguist Dell Hymes (2001) who researched how sociocultural factors influence communicative competence. Hymes concluded that interlocutors who communicate successfully follow certain agreed-upon grammatical rules, yet they also communicate according to social expectations. This perspective of communicative competence maintains that language cannot be separated from its social reality and responsibility. When examining language and communication from this viewpoint, Hymes (2001, 63) started from four questions: whether language is possible in the given situation (e.g. grammar structure), whether it is feasible (related to performance and acceptability), whether it is appropriate considering the context, and whether the language is actually used. In his studies he noticed how competent speakers used possible, feasible and appropriate language structures in order to create or explain cultural behavior (Hymes 2001, 67). Here he noticed that depending on the



conversational situation, competent speakers make conscious, and sometimes unconscious choices to omit certain language structures. An example would be when a speaker replaces the modal *should* with *could* when making a recommendation in order to express a context of choice for the listener. This is what Canale and Swain call strategic competence. Strategic competence includes the ability to convey meaning either grammatically or sociolinguistically. In terms of grammatical strategizing, when a speaker is not able to communicate the desired message due to a lack of competence, he can, for example, use the strategy of paraphrasing (Canale and Swain 1980, 30). When it comes to sociolinguistic ability as a strategy, this allows the speaker to react appropriately in a given sociological situation (e.g. attempting to resolve a problem) (Canale and Swain 1980, 30). As Hymes, Canale and Swain demonstrate, the social existence of language is undeniable.

Hymes wrote a personal note to Gomes de Matos (2000, 339), in which he recognizes the benefits of including communicative peace to the model of communicative competence. He identifies the potential that communicative peace has for creating a personal and social environment of global sharing (Gomes de Matos 2000, 339). Adding communicative peace to Hymes' model of communicative competence could provide language users with an awareness that the choice exists to communicate in ways that could sustain their right to communicate peacefully. With this awareness, language users would understand that there is a difference between peaceful and violent language, and be able to make an informed choice to

communicate using either one. However, how could the language teacher, in this case the ESOL teacher, effectively help learners realize this choice?

### ***Applied Peace Linguistics***

Concerned with helping teachers create a space for such a choice, Gomes de Matos looks at how peace linguistics, and more specifically communicative peace, can be applied in the language classroom. In his words, “applied linguistics is an interdisciplinary field that addresses an increasing variety of language-based problems in areas such as language learning, and teaching, literacy, language contact, language policy and planning, language pathology, and language use”, and by examining these issues through the lens of peace, the field of applied peace linguistics emerges (Gomes de Matos 2006, 161). For Gomes de Matos, applied peace linguistics is “aimed at helping educational systems create conditions for the preparation of human beings as peaceful language users”(Gomes de Matos 2006, 162). Gomes de Matos confirms that he is encouraged to promote the combination of applied peace linguistics and English as a result of the growing attention the concept of peace is having within the global association, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Inc. (Gomes de Matos 2002). As indicated on the TESOL website, there is a special interest group within this organization devoted to connecting “language teaching to social responsibility, world citizenship, and an awareness of global issues such as peace, human rights, and the environment”. In February 2009, the TESOL organization held a conference entitled *Building a Culture of Peace: Integrating Language Teaching and Learning with Social Responsibility ---*

*Sharing Practical Strategies for Understanding and Resolving Conflict*. Momentum seems to be building around the concept of peace and ESOL.

Considering such burgeoning interest, and wanting to educate teachers to become peaceful language users, Gomes de Matos (2002) dedicated a list of classroom applications for communicative peace specific to ESOL contexts (see appendix). His suggestions range from practical ways to teach ESL and EFL students to be constructive communicators, to suggestions for nurturing compassionate communication. I will explain both these suggestions in the following section. Although Gomes de Matos' intentions are clear, there is a limit to the educational benefit of these classroom applications. Learning about the applications alone, without having the language awareness of how language can be violent and peaceful, may not help educate ESOL teachers how to be peaceful communicators. We will examine further in this chapter, the idea that without such language awareness, teachers may not be able to effectively teach communicative peace.

*Constructive communication* is an approach that Gomes de Matos (2006, 168) developed, which encourages the use of positive language to increase positive interactions. He refers to positive interactions as interactions that are cordial, responsible, good, kind, respectful of values, and provide constructive feedback. In addition, when engaging in constructive communication, questions should be asked in a positive manner. People should follow these principles when they communicate according to this approach (Gomes de Matos 2006, 168.). To encourage constructive communication, one of the classroom techniques he suggests is for ESOL teachers to

guide students in making a list of English vocabulary, or expressions, they consider inconsiderate and exchange these for ones that are humanizing (see application no. 3 in the appendix). For example, some people in North-America use the slang expression, “That’s gay.” to describe something that does not appeal to them. They may not like a pair of shoes and say, “They’re so gay.” Some people consider this expression to be offensive. After having learned about how certain language can cause conflict or violence, students could replace this expression with one that have figured out is less offensive, such as, “Those shoes aren’t my style” or “I don’t like the color of those shoes.” In this situation the student takes responsibility for not liking the esthetics of the shoes, instead of insulting the shoes, or the person wearing them.

Friedrich (2006, 53) extends this checklist application by suggesting that teachers introduce activities that encourage learners to practice positive language with their peers in authentic situations. For example, students may practice the technique mentioned above during group work. By challenging students to use constructive communication in a real-life situation, where they may encounter conflict, negotiation increases, and the language form has a better chance of being internalized. Compared to simply switching a list of negative expressions to some that are positive, Friedrich’s perspective increases opportunities for students to engage in positive interactions, and as a result, may also develop their competence for communicative peace.

In terms of cultivating *compassionate communication* within language learners, the last point on Gomes de Matos' (2002) ESOL checklist (see application no. 8 in the Appendix) suggests that teachers encourage students to express feelings of love for their "linguistic neighbor". Although he does not define what he means by *linguistic neighbor*, one can infer that he refers to speakers of other languages, while using the word *neighbor* to suggest cordiality. One way to express these feelings of love would be by empathizing with this linguistic neighbor. He encourages teachers to teach empathy as a skill towards cross-cultural understanding: "This ever-inspiring psychological concept reminds us that, as humanizing teachers of English, we should do our best to use (and help our students to do so, too) English for cross-cultural understanding, for cooperation, for sharing" (Gomes de Matos 2001).

Gomes de Matos (2001) considers empathy to be one of the most important concepts of conflict resolution research connected to our humanizing potential. Empathy is what gives humans the ability to understand, accept and connect with others. Broadening his point, Friedrich (2007, 53) explains that by teaching students how to relate to others, and to understand their different ways of living, students should gradually move away from their ethnocentric perspectives. It is via an understanding of, and empathy for another way of life that the first steps towards peaceful communication can be taken.

Although it may be ideal for teachers to help their students learn how to be empathetic, this is a challenging standard to achieve. As renowned psychologist Carl

Roger's describes, empathy requires fully entering the space of another human being; however, entry into this space requires focused attention:

(...) for the time being, you lay aside your own views and values in order to enter another's world without prejudice. In some sense it means that you lay aside your self; this can only be done by persons who are secure enough in themselves that they know they will not get lost in what may turn out to be the strange or bizarre world of the other, and that they can comfortably return to their own world when they wish.

Perhaps this description makes clear that being empathic is a complex, demanding, and strong – yet also subtle and gentle – way of being. (Rogers 1980, 143)

The challenge lies in the teacher's awareness of the concept of empathy, and in this case, how it displays itself through language. By saying empathy needs to be taught, there may be an admittance that humans are deficient in the ability to empathize.

Furthermore, if this behavior is lacking in language learners, is it not safe to assume that it may also be missing in teachers? A basic principle of teaching is that in order to successfully teach someone you must have a strong understanding of the subject matter. This relates to teaching empathy, as much as it relates to teaching English.

In order to teach this concept teachers must be aware of how empathy is present in, or absent from their communicative repertoire. How can it be presumed that teachers could teach this concept effectively when it is possibly absent from their linguistic proficiency as well? Perhaps they understand the concept of empathy, but do not demonstrate this understanding since they believe it is not appropriate, or that it does not matter. Why would a teacher teach about empathy if these were his or her beliefs?

While at the outset Gomes de Matos and Friedrich's suggestions might seem straightforward to implement, they may be more complicated. In terms of the two items on the checklist, constructive and compassionate communication, complications arise when the teacher's understanding of what constitutes positive language, positive interactions, and empathy is put into question. What social, and cultural filters are teachers looking through which helps them discern positive language from negative language? Depending on what kind of lens they look through, their vision of applied peace linguistics may not meet the criteria for communicative peace.

Although the techniques Gomes de Matos and Friedrich suggest may help teachers integrate a peace dimension into their classroom, they may not provide enough teaching support. In this regard, teachers who want to teach for communicative peace will need to examine their current awareness and understanding of how language relates to the elements of peace, violence and conflict. If teachers don't examine this relationship, it is possible they may not succeed in teaching communicative peace. The following section will examine Friedrich's suggestions for how TESOL education programs can encourage raising such awareness.

### ***Current Proposals for Raising Awareness in TESOL Education Programs***

Gomes de Matos (2002) may have understood the limitations of his proposal that ESOL teachers should recognize communicative peace as a "deeper dimension" of communicative competence; as a result, he offered another suggestion that,

“TESOL Education Programs should include a methodological component centered on how to prepare teachers to teach English for communicative peace.” Friedrich offers some suggestions to ESOL teachers who require training in order to teach towards this competence.

Friedrich contends that if linguistic peace promotion is to be successful, then it is crucial for ESOL teachers to be “able to choose peace-fostering approaches, methods, and materials” (2007, 56). She relates this ability to teacher education programs broadening their focus from grammatical and discourse competence to paying closer attention to strategic and sociolinguistic competence. Both Hymes and Gomes de Matos also associate these competences with communicative peace. Sociolinguistic competence depends on the appropriateness of utterances and discourse in relation to the sociocultural context (Canale and Swain 1980, 30). It is also dependent on how grammatical forms transmit the proper attitude or style in a given context. Strategic competence relates to a person’s ability to consciously plan his or her language use (Canale and Swain 1980, 30). According to Friedrich, these “competences may include the ability to negotiate meaning and power” and therefore give language learners the choice to express themselves from a perspective of peace (Friedrich 2007, 57). These competences, coupled with communicative peace, could “transcend functionality” and provide the language learner with the capacity to “promote peace and social transformation” (Friedrich 2007, 57). Advocating for the teacher’s “role as an agent for social change”, Friedrich (2007, 56) offers the following four recommendations for teacher preparation programs.



The first requirement is to give teachers the chance to read about and discuss the social significance of language. By having this discussion teachers may open to the idea of their students and them becoming “agents of social transformation”(Friedrich 2007, 57). Once teachers have explored this area of sociolinguistics then their instructor can motivate them to suggest classroom applications, which relate language and society to concepts of peace.

The second requirement relates to the changing role of the teacher as controller of the content, to his or her role as a mediator of information (Friedrich 2007, 57). She explains that it is important for teachers to explore their changing role since classroom situations demand divergent perspectives. Although she does not explicitly say this, the teacher’s role as a mediator provides room for student exploration into concepts of peace. If education programs prepare teachers to become mediators, then they prepare teachers to create more room for meaning negotiation (development of strategic competence) within their classrooms. With careful guidance, this negotiation may lean towards peace.

The third requirement is to motivate teachers to consider the consequence of the methods, materials and language they use in their lessons (Friedrich 2007, 57). On this point Friedrich extends Gomes de Matos’s (2001) suggestion that teachers use material “in terms of their communicative peace value.” For example, does the material promote positive language and does it encourage strategic and sociolinguistic competence (Friedrich 2007, 57-58)? By asking these questions, teachers can form guiding principles for choosing peace-evoking material.

Friedrich's final requirement involves teacher educators prompting teachers to be critical of the material they use as it relates to cultural awareness (Friedrich 2007, 58). By being critical of how material addresses, or fails to address culture, teachers can help cultivate an atmosphere of peace and empathy within their students. This is another negotiation skill, where learners examine their understanding of culture in relation to another culture. By developing the ability to critically analyze material for cultural relevance, students may learn the importance of culture in relation to communication skills.

Friedrich's suggestions are valuable for engaging teacher awareness of strategic and sociolinguistic competence in relation to peace linguistics. However, despite the benefits of these recommendations, they are also limited. Her requirements may not provide enough support to prepare teachers to create lessons focused on strategic, sociolinguistic, and communicative peace competence. In order to teach communicative peace, teachers also need to be aware of how their own language may be considered violent and peaceful. Her proposals seem to focus on academic and conceptual declarations, and although these are important, change is more likely to occur if teachers personally experience how language can be peaceful and violent. As mentioned above, Friedrich believes teachers can be advocates of social change, but what happens in teacher training programs that awaken them to the need to teach peace via language? If it is believed that the institution of language is currently supported by a violent structure (see Chapter 4), then how can it be assumed that ESOL teachers, who are urged to advocate peace linguistics, are not also being held up by the same foundation? How can social change occur if personal

change, within the teacher, does not happen first? On the surface, peace and empathy in language are not concepts that can be easily grasped. Understanding empathy and peace involves an intimate personal experience; a reflection on how these concepts have played a part in one's language. The same observation applies to violence and conflict. In order to illustrate the importance of language awareness, I will explore the concept of teacher language awareness (TLA) in the following section. We will then consider TLA in relation to linguistic peace and violence in order to demonstrate its relevance to teaching communicative peace as a dimension of communicative competence.

### ***Teacher Language Awareness and Communicative Peace***

According to Andrews (2007, 30), TLA is a "bridge between language proficiency and knowledge of the subject matter." He defines language proficiency as including strategic competence, language competence (i.e. pragmatic, grammatical, discourse and sociolinguistic competence) and psychomotor skills. By creating a bridge between language proficiency and knowledge of subject matter, TLA can be considered as a "pedagogically related reflective dimension of language proficiency", and an element of a teacher's pedagogical content knowledge (i.e. knowledge of the subject matter, learners, contexts curriculum and pedagogy) (Andrews 2007, 31). TLA is a teacher's ability to reflect on how the language he or she uses (language proficiency), and also the language he or she teaches (subject matter), will affect his or her teaching practices (pedagogical content knowledge) (Andrews 2007, 24). In Andrews' research, subject matter refers to grammar. For

the purpose of this paper, grammar will be mirrored with communicative peace (sociolinguistic and strategic competence) when discussing Andrews' research.

In his studies, Andrews observed various EFL classrooms to learn how TLA affected the teachers' lessons. In one class he observed a teacher who had no problem explaining a grammatical rule (passive voice), but when asked by a student the meaning behind the rule (why is the passive voice used?), she acknowledged that she was "unable to resolve her students' difficulties, because she lacks the relevant knowledge of the underlying systems of language" (Andrews 2007, 24). Comparing this scenario to communicative peace, the same problem could occur. What would happen if a student asked why certain language is considered peaceful or violent, and the teacher lacked sociolinguistic knowledge of how violence or peace linguistically exhibit themselves in social structures? The teacher may not be able to formulate an answer, thereby hindering a potentially important learning moment not only for the student who asked, but also for the other students in class who are listening. From another perspective, what would be the result if a student asked the teacher how to paraphrase violent language discourse into a peaceful form, and the teacher lacked the strategic competence to provide such an answer? Once again, the teacher is not prepared. Without TLA, teachers will fail to plan lessons according to learner needs; they may not be able to effectively deal with errors; they may not be able to explain the subject matter; and as a result, their students may lose confidence in their teaching ability, and the content of their lessons (Andrews 2007, 35).

As Andrews (2007, 28) explains, “teachers of language, like any educated users of that language, undoubtedly need sufficiently high levels of implicit and explicit knowledge of grammar to facilitate effective communication. In the case of teachers, their effectiveness as communicators is directly linked to their adequacy as models for their students.” By replacing the word *grammar* found in the quote, with the phrase *pragmatics of communicative peace* (*pragmatics* pertains to the appropriateness of language use in relation to the context in which it is used (Bachman 1990, 90-91), while *pragmatics of communicative peace* refers to peaceful language in contextual use), we discover what kind of knowledge is required to effectively teach communicative peace. Such knowledge depends on certain degrees of implicit and explicit knowledge. Implicit knowledge is unconscious knowledge, while explicit knowledge can be verbalized since it is now conscious (Andrews 2007, 14). Without implicit and explicit knowledge of peaceful and violent language, a teacher will have difficulty communicating why language is peaceful and violent, and will also have a hard time explaining how peaceful language can replace violent language. Just as language awareness is a prerequisite for teaching grammar, it is also a prerequisite to effectively teaching communicative peace.

Gomes de Matos’ objectives for providing classroom techniques that promote communicative peace are well intended. They are meant to engage the language learner in a critical dialogue of how peace pertains to language, and as a result learn how language can promote peace. However, classroom techniques alone may not suffice for encouraging communicative peace as an element of communicative competence. In order to for an ESOL teacher to successfully promote any facet of

language, he or she needs a certain level of language awareness. In relation to communicative peace, this awareness is associated with sociolinguistic and strategic competence. The raised language awareness must be connected to the teacher's personal experience, rather than academic knowledge. By making implicit knowledge of violent and peaceful language explicit, the teacher should be better prepared to plan lessons that promote communicative peace. My conclusion offers suggestions for how to raise teacher language awareness as it pertains to peace and violence.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

The conclusion of this paper makes recommendations for practice to ESOL teacher education programs that wish to increase teacher language awareness to how language can be violent and peaceful, in order to encourage communicative peace as a part of communicative competence. The concept of violence, as it pertains to social structure and language, is not easily discernable. People go through their daily lives using language that may be oppressive and offensive, yet not realize the impact it has on members of their society, and on themselves. This language becomes a common way to communicate, but is rarely called into question. Peace may not be an important language focus for teachers who already perceive their language to be peaceful, and therefore in no need of alteration, or for teachers who do not believe language is innately violent or peaceful. These are the challenges that Gomes de Matos and Friedrich face with their suggestions for training teachers towards a competence for communicative peace.

If ESOL teachers hold mindsets such as the ones mentioned above, then one is left wondering what awareness teachers would need in order to effectively use, or to make the choice to use, Gomes de Matos' checklist of classroom techniques. A similar drawback occurs for Friedrich. Although Friedrich's recommendations for ESOL teacher preparation programs may increase teacher awareness to the social significance of language and how it relates to peace, one cannot know if teachers

would associate such awareness with their own way of communicating. As research on TLA shows, teachers' awareness of their own language use and knowledge determines how they will communicate this awareness to their students. If designers of ESOL teacher education programs held the belief that language can be violent, and wanted to train teachers to teach towards the competence of communicative peace, they would need to incorporate approaches aimed at raising teacher language awareness. One such approach that could be applied is the conflict resolution process, Nonviolent Communication (NVC).

NVC, established in 1984 by psychologist Marshall Rosenberg, is a conflict resolution approach which encourages speakers to express themselves honestly by using its four integral elements: observation, feelings, needs and requests (Rosenberg 2005, 6). The receiver of such an expression aims to listen empathetically via these four elements (Rosenberg 2005, 7). To listen empathetically is to listen by focusing on what the other is feeling or needing, instead of blaming oneself, or judging the speaker (Rosenberg 2005, 94). The idea is that by focusing on feelings and needs while listening and speaking (by empathizing), the risk of conflict is reduced since one is able to connect on an emotional, rather than intellectual level (Rosenberg 2005, 93). This type of communication increases understanding, and also increases the likelihood that requests will be taken into consideration, thereby reducing the chance of conflict. Consequently, NVC asks us to closely consider how language is used and perceived prior, and during the communication process.



In his article, "Language, Peace and Conflict Resolution", Gomes de Matos (2006, 162) reviews implications that the NVC process has for applied peace linguistics. His examination focuses on how teachers can practice and encourage this approach in their classrooms; however, he mainly focuses on the lexical significance of NVC. For example, he recommends using the list of feelings (i.e. affectionate, cheerful, free and loving) created by Rosenberg as a "checklist of communicative responsibilities" (Gomes de Matos 2006, 162). He also explains that a "language-aware teacher" would refrain from using authoritarian verbs such as "allow" and "let" when talking about how they instruct their students; for example, "I let my students to use computers" or "I allow students to go to the bathroom during class" (Gomes de Matos 2006, 163). Instead they might say, "My students have the right to..." (Gomes de Matos 2006, 163). He also brings to light the fact that teachers who use such authoritarian language are "unaware of the humanizing nature of language use" (Gomes de Matos 2006, 163). As this paper has tried to prove, this last comment might be the difference between a teacher who teaches or does not teach communicative peace.

Despite this revealing disclosure, Gomes de Matos does not recommend NVC as a method for raising teacher language awareness to the concepts of peace and violence; nevertheless, NVC offers important potential for raising such awareness. By going through the NVC process teachers may learn that their habitual method of communication has the potential to create conflict, and as a result, they may learn to use a more positive alternative. In order to achieve such an end, ESOL teacher educators would need to introduce NVC into their curricula as a subject of study.

In order to learn NVC, one must personally experience the process; therefore, teacher educators would need to facilitate ESOL teachers through it. Practice involves teachers reflecting on past verbal exchanges they have had in their lives that have brought them negative feelings (i.e. sadness, despair, anger, frustration). This could be an event when they were either the initiator or the recipient of the negative discourse. For example, a teacher wanting her student to be more diligent with his homework may have said to her student, “You never do your homework” and then received the angry response, “That’s not true! I did it last week.” or a maybe heard the despairing response, “You’re right. I’m so lazy.” In both these cases, the teacher did not receive the desired result, which was to increase the student’s homework production, but instead created a communicative barrier between her and her student. Now the teacher feels tension between the two of them.

NVC teaches that certain types of expressions can cause negative reactions in the people hearing them. For example, hearing words such as “always”, “never”, and “whenever” can be interpreted as evaluations, and upon hearing them people have a tendency to become defensive or self-judgmental (Rosenberg 2005, 31). This is what happened in the student’s case above. Instead of making general statements, NVC recommends being as specific as possible when communicating an observation. Other types of language usage that mix evaluation with observation include verbs with evaluative connotations such as “procrastinate”, and “threaten”; adjectives such as “stupid”, “ugly”, or even “beautiful” that seem to state facts, but are actually evaluations; and inferences that give the impression that there is only one possibility, “He won’t hand in his homework.” (Rosenberg 2005, 30). By reflecting

on instances when they used or heard such language, teachers may begin to gain sociolinguistic understanding of the kind of language that can cause potential conflict. Then by learning how to modify this defensive language, teachers would increase their strategic awareness and ability. For example, in order to revise the original homework statement in NVC fashion, one could say, “Yesterday I told you that your homework was due today. You didn’t hand in your homework today.” This is a clear observation without evaluation. Hearing this might reduce the chance of negative feedback.

By going through the NVC process, teachers may also gain a stronger understanding of the concept of empathy, which, as discussed in Chapter 5, was a teaching point recommended by Gomes de Matos. In order to understand empathy, one must experience it, and empathy is the main principle of NVC. NVC asks users to pay attention to the feelings and needs of the person to whom they are listening or speaking. Making the connection with the needs behind a communication helps one find the common human link, no matter what the social or cultural background. A teacher who experiences being heard empathetically, or experiences someone speaking to them in this manner, may begin to understand the value of communicative peace.

In conclusion, this paper recommends that ESOL teacher educators who want to encourage communicative peace incorporate a course connected to an approach such as NVC into their education programs. Such a course would engage teachers in a reflective process concentrated on peaceful and violent communication. Although

NVC was the main focus for raising such awareness, there may be other conflict resolution approaches that would prove just as effective. The important point is that no matter what the approach, it should raise a teacher's sociolinguistic and strategic awareness to peaceful and violent language. Once ESOL teachers go through such a program, they will be able to make an informed decision to either teach, or not teach communicative peace.

## Appendix

*The following excerpt is taken verbatim from Gomes de Matos 2002 (see reference list).*

The following checklist is suggestive of classroom applications. Colleagues are urged to expand upon and to refine it so as to best reflect the educational and sociocultural contexts in which they help students learn English. Some of the strategies worth trying out for teaching friendly uses of English are as follows:

- 1) Selecting and systematically teaching peace-promoting vocabulary. Included therein: positivizers, a term coined by this author to refer to adjectives and verbs which maximize positive features in a human being's characteristics and actions. To give a specific example of positivizers (Gomes de Matos, 2001 b) imagine a speech act (or a situation) in which you feel like praising someone's performance. You could say: S/he did a fine / great / superb / wonderful job on that project. Similarly, while witnessing two friends arguing over a current issue, you decide to exercise your right as a peace-oriented mediator and say to them: "both of you have the right to disagree, but how about seeing eye to eye on this matter, (or "how about compromising a little").
- 2) Providing ESL users with contextualized examples of unfriendly English, that is, of vocabulary to be avoided because of their potential offensive / insulting / dehumanizing effect. Random House Webster's College Dictionary (1997) features a section on "Avoiding insensitive and offensive language" ( pp.1507 - 1511). Lexical items to be avoided include terms that emphasize the disability rather than the person. Thus, instead of "AIDS victim" we would say "person with AIDS"; instead of saying "the handicapped, the disabled, cripple," we would say "persons with disabilities, person with a disability, etc."
- 3) Challenging learners to identify insensitive uses of English in the media (press / television / movies) and in fictional works and to replace such objectionable expressions with humanizingly rendered language.
- 4) Challenging students to document friendly uses of English heard in public communication situations, such as lectures and talks by local and/or invited speakers (to one's campus, high school, elementary school, community group, etc.).
- 5) Challenging students to exchange peace-enhancing-sustaining statements, proverbs, and quotations with learners both intraculturally and cross culturally.
- 6) Challenging students to create peace-promoting mini-glossaries for use in different professions, for instance, tourism and hotel management.
- 7) Challenging students to cultivate and sustain an awareness of their responsibility as peace patriots through their use of English and of their first language and other languages they are fluent in.

8) Sensitizing learners to the awareness of language using as not only for interacting but for expressing the feeling of loving one's linguistic neighbor.

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